



DIABLO VALLEY ATARI NEWSLETTER COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

September 1987

D A C E

RETURN ADDRESS

DACE
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CONCORD, CA 94519



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MEETING SCHEDULE

The next three meetings of **DACE** will be held at the **Contra Costa Water Building** located at **1331 Concord Ave.** in Concord.

Thursday - Sept 3rd - 7PM

Thursday - Oct 1st - 7PM

Thursday - Nov 5th - 7PM

September Meeting Topic

Board member Elections. 8-bit and ST Disk of the Month. Software raffle for 8-bit and ST. Your questions answered. And maybe a suprize hardware demo...

Dace Membership Information

(Please Print)

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Equipment

Computer Type(s) _____

Drive(s) _____

Printer(s) _____

Modem _____

Other _____

Suggestions for future meetings _____

Comments _____

DACE annual dues are \$20 for individuals or families and \$10 for students. Our year runs from October 1st to September 30th and dues are pro rated quarterly. Use this information sheet to either renew your membership or to join. The information will let DACE better serve you as a member. Bring your completed form to the next meeting or mail to 3602 Dumbarton St. Concord, CA 94519 with your check payable to DACE. Remember people who join or renew during September or October receive a FREE Atari mug.



PRESIDENTS PAGE

by
Mark Butler



I have something very disturbing to talk about to start my column off with this month. I saw an ad in a large magazine that carries Atari and other computers and something about it caught my eye and got me to thinking. I don't know about you but I have often wondered why everyone trumpets the death of the 8-bit computers except the people who are buying them. I seem to recall that last year was Atari's best year ever for the 8-bit machines. You would think that would mean that the software producers would at least give lip service to those people.

I think that it runs deeper than that. I think that it is possible that there is an active hostility towards the Atari world, perhaps because of past injustices in the form of massive pirating. At any rate the ad I saw was a full page ad announcing Ultima IV. I looked at the ad for a long while before I realized why, they mentioned every computer that Ultima runs on except the Atari! Now I happen to know that Ultima IV runs on a Atari because I have one. The ad mentioned Commodore, IBM, etc. but no Atari.

Disturbed, I scanned through the rest of the magazine and others. In about half of the cases the Atari was mentioned (usually in very small type) and the rest they didn't even bother. In no instance did I see an ad that advertised an Atari version in big letters. Rather interesting.

Perhaps the software industry has a grudge against the Atari community and is using this tactic. If nobody knows that a program is out for the Atari they cannot buy it, if they don't buy it the software industry can point to slow sales as the reason to cut back on Atari support.

I thought you might be interested in this. Keep your eyes out and see if you agree, as always, opposing viewpoints will be given all the consideration they are due!

On to happier subjects. Last month's meeting was a lot of fun. Although the turnout was small we had a great time. After the usual bull session, where we approved the purchase of a Epson FX86E printer for the club and approved funds to purchase more raffle material, it was on to the disk of the month.

Dan put together another good disk of the month for the 8-bitters (8-bit sounds so clinical but it is so much work to type out 400-800-XL-XE every time). The Digi-drum is a neat program. Lots of fun to play with. After that came the ST DOM. Another good effort by Big Mike, packed with great stuff.

After the break DACE's own Jan Iverson -

President of EZUSE software, gave a demo of his new Quizzmaster Construction Set for the ST. A very nice program that allows you to create your own questions and series of multiple choice answers. If you are a teacher whether professionally or just for your own kids this program is a good choice.

Afterwards, Mark Hannan showed off Chessmaster 2000 and Techmate for the ST. Both are excellent chess programs. Each having different strengths. Afterwards they were both part of the raffle.

One subject that came up and you should be thinking about is that membership dues and officer elections are coming up this meeting. The membership dues are very small (\$20 per year/\$10 if you are a student) but it is important to the club to have as many paid members as possible. It is certainly possible to attend meetings without being a member (and a lot of people do so) and all are welcome however when the board does its planning it is very helpful to know how many people are involved.

So that's my speech, renew your membership. Its only \$20 and you get this great newsletter each month, discounts on raffle tickets and DOM's and DACE gets a clearer picture of its supporters.

Also coming up are elections. At the last meeting we had an alarming breakout of apathy on the subject. DACE is as good a club as it is through volunteer effort. The amount of effort is not great, I put in about 5 hours a month. 2 for the regular meeting, 2 at the officers meeting and 1 writing this column (some of you are saying "it shows"). None of the offices involves a large amount of work or time.

One thing that I have really enjoyed in being a DACE officer this past year is the feeling of camaradery that develops among the people who work as a team behind the scenes. We felt the same thing at the Atari fest, after everyone was gone and just the cleanup crews were working, we joked and laughed and felt like we were a close knit group. DACE gives me that same feeling with a lot less work. At the officers meeting we have a good time planning how DACE can help our members. It feels good to be helping people, to be donating a little time for a worthy cause.

Anyway the upshot of all this is that the elections are coming up and I would like to see a lot of people volunteer for the positions. Its fun, give it a try. If you are too shy to stand up in front of people and volunteer or you just want to talk about
(continued)



MARK MY WORDS

by
Mark Hannan



Last month I attended the Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics (SIGGRAPH) held at the Anaheim Convention Center (down the street from Mr. M. Mouse, don't you know). I was really amazed with where computer graphics are going, these days. I was dissatisfied not to see a single Atari Compute there, although I am sure a lot of stuff could have been done on the Atari's.

I was surprised to see the Commodore Amiga had a large booth there. They were showing the Aegis Animator. Aegis also had a new program for the Amiga that was a super 3D animation program. I asked an employee of Aegis if they were going to come out with an Atari version. The man was very rude to me, but essentially said they had no plans whatsoever to come out with the program for the Atari. This sure seemed strange to me since I saw a demonstration of the ST version of Aegis Animator and the people from Aegis were saying how much more they liked the ST over the Amiga! Hmmm.

I think some of the reasons that more people do not take the Atari more seriously are the products Atari promises, and never bring out. Did you see John's Atari Museum of almost-Atari products at the World of Atari Fair? This is the kind of thing I am talking about. I bought my ST primarily because of some of the promised products that have not yet showed up.

Where is the Amy super synthesizer sound chip??? This is a product that an ex-Atari employee came up with that was supposed to be better than just about any synthesizer in the world! They were going to shrink this whole synthesizer box down and put it on one chip. I last heard Atari say that a third (or was it a fourth) company was trying to get this on one chip, but was having trouble perfecting it. Hey, I wonder if they have ever thought that if the problem is getting it all on one chip, maybe they could make a small board with more than one chip on it?

I have also been patiently waiting for the Gen-Lock box for the Atari. This is a device that allows you to mix and overlay video and camera signals with computer generated input and output. Amiga has had one for quite some time now. Several times in the past year I have heard people at Atari meetings say they have seen various third party Gen-Lock boxes for the Atari, but they were very expensive. So if they do exist, why can't "Mr. Power without the Price" get his hands on one, and mass produce the sucker?

Elections are coming up. It has been a fun

year for me being your Vice President. I have tried to give something back to this club, that has been good to me over the years. I hope I have done a fair job, and that you have enjoyed my monthly newsletter articles.

Vice President is really the easiest position of all the board members. The minimum requirements are that you attend the board meeting, and the main DACE meeting for a couple of hours each, once a month, and spend about an hour a month writing a newsletter article on anything that strikes your fancy. The only other requirement is to fill in for the President if he (or she) can not make it to the main DACE meeting, and sort of head up the show.

Pretty easy, huh? Besides that you can add more stuff to it, if you want, and pretty much custom tailor the job to fit you. You can play with (er, I mean REVIEW the newest software releases we will be raffling off in the future, or incorporate parts of the other board positions into it also (like getting speakers to come, or write to get software to raffle off, etc.)

If you want to throw your Vice President title around, you will be surprised the effect it has when talking to hardware, and software people. You can get a lot more response for getting speakers to come, or to get someone to donate a program for the raffle, or trying to buy something for yourself, by (accidentally of course) mentioning that you are "the Vice President of a prominent Bay Area user group".

Because of some other commitments at the moment, and because I do not feel I have enough time to do the type of job I personally would like to do, and because it kind of conflicts with my work, I do not believe I will be able to run for an office this year. This is your chance! Why don't you give one of the offices a try?

If you have a few contacts in the Atari related world, and like to talk to people, why not volunteer for Program Organizer (Chairman sounds chauvinist, and Chairperson sounds a little funny to me)? This is a great chance for you to get your name better known in the Atari community (who knows where that might lead for future jobs), and at the same time get some interesting people to come and speak to our club.

If you are "Mr. Modem", and gather a lot of public domain games (8-bit and/or 16-bit) how about being a DACE disk librarian? This could be a number of people helping gathering programs, making a few copies of the disk of the month, etc.

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PRESIDENTS PAGE...(continued)

it, give me a call. We still have lots of positions with 0 or 1 person so far.

On a more personal note, I went a little crazy last month and purchased GFA Basic and IMG Scan for my ST. GFA Basic is a great language. Anyone that does any Basic programming on their ST or 800 will feel right at home. All the normal stuff is supported as well as some spiffy features not found in normal basics. Differences are minor, I sat down and skimmed the manual and was writing my first program in 1 hour.

It has complete GEM support so you can change the shape of the mouse pointer, open the dialog boxes and even create your own pull down menus. Graphic support includes circles, ellipses, boxes, rounded boxes, irregular polygons all of which can be filled or not. 36 different fill patterns, 6 different line types, text at angles at any size and more. I can't wait to get some programs done for the disk of the month.

My IMG Scan was a product I saw at the Atari fest. It is a \$99 video digitizer that connects to your printer. I do not have a video camera so this was the cheapest alternative for me. When I received it I was a little dismayed, it does not look like a professional product. It has a small board that plugs into the ST's cartridge slot and 2 fiber optic lines that run to the printer. After about 2 hours of fiddling I got it to work and it works surprisingly well. Perhaps I can demo it for you at a DACE meeting. If you don't have a video camera and want to do some digitizing this seems to be a good product. It's files can be output in Degas or Neo formats.

Well that's all for this time, I hope to see you all at the meeting.

MARK MY WORDS...(continued)

Do you like to talk in front of a crowd, or would like to become better? Want to be a little more a leader, instead of a follower? Why not try for President, (or the cushier Vice President position)?

Like using your publishing partner, or other desktop publishing? Want to learn more about it? Like to gather articles and maybe get on the road toward a future in Magazines, Publishing, etc.? Why not try for Newsletter (or maybe just help out)?

Good with numbers, and financing? Don't want to really be as visible a roll as the President, but still want to get more involved with the club? Why not try for Treasurer?

All these positions allow you to gain experience for the future, give you a nice feeling of

accomplishment, and lets you do a little something for your friends and people with the same interests as you. Putting these positions on your resume wouldn't look too bad either. It tells a potential employer that you will take a little more responsibility than the average person. (Couldn't hurt, right?)

If you would like to try for one of the positions, it is very informal. You can volunteer, or have someone else nominate you at the next meeting, or call one of the board members. Talk to us or give us a note at the next meeting. The club is nothing without all of YOU!

CHESS WARS...(continued)

My opinion is that if you are looking to buy a chess program for the Atari, you really can't go wrong with either the 8 or 16-bit Chessmaster 2000. It is loaded with features.

If you want to learn chess, then Chessmaster 2000 or Odesta chess is for you. Both come with plenty features, a book explaining the rules of chess, and saved famous games you can play back and participate in. I believe the 8-bit Odesta chess program might have a few more features, but the display is not as nice, and it is a little more difficult to move Odesta's pieces.

If you want to play in tournaments, then TechMate is probably the best choice. It simulates the tournament atmosphere the closest with its adjustable time clocks, and simplified controls. It also had the nicest display pieces of any chess program I have yet seen on a computer. It is very lacking in options though. Neither TechMate or Krabat allow you to save or load games (I personally believe this to be a big drawback). TechMate does seem to play a slightly tougher, faster game than the others tested though.

If lack of money is your biggest concern, and you have a ST, I suggest the public domain program Krabat. It plays a mean game, and has a few features not even found on TechMate.

As I have mentioned before, the kind of chess program you get is determined by your needs. Another game of chess anyone?

THE PUNCH LINE

History teacher: How many of you object to war? (Many hands shot up.) Mark, tell me why you object to war.

Mark: 'Cause wars make history.

If the cost of education continues to rise, education will become as expensive as ignorance.



CHESS WARS

by
Mark Hannan



(a continuation of last month's write up on Chess programs for the Atari 8 and 16-bit computers.)

At the board meeting in July, I discovered our club had the 16-bit version of Chessmaster 2000 donated to us at the end of "the World of Atari" fair. I'm sorry I didn't realize this sooner or I would have included the review of this in last month's chess comparison article.

I had less than a week with it (which translates into about 3-6 usable computer hours for me) so didn't have much chance to extensively test it. I did test it out as much as time permitted me, though. I then demonstrated the programs at the last meeting, and finally we raffled off the 8-bit and 16-bit versions of Chessmaster 2000, and the 16-bit TechMate chess programs. I tried real hard to win one of these, but alas, my number didn't come up for this. (I was lucky enough to win the Atari Space Age Joystick, though).

I want to give some quick impressions of the 16-bit version of Chessmaster, and then a final total of games played against 8 and 16-bit programs.

The display is very nice on the 16-bit Chessmaster program, but are not as nice as TechMate's display.

Chessmaster lets you change both the colors of the pieces, and the chessboard easily. The 3-D view is a lot easier to see on the ST version than on the 8-bit, but it is still difficult to see short pieces behind taller ones. (because of this I personally only played in the 2-D standard mode).

It does use the mouse, but the pointer is a full hand instead of a pointing finger, or arrow. This sometimes leads to problems moving the pieces (especially ones against the lower row). The monochrome version has a bug (or is it a feature)?

After you choose something from the pull down window, the window still displays instead of disappearing. This would indicate you can select another thing from the window. When you try to choose another item from the window, you start moving the pieces behind the window and the window display becomes messy (I do not like this at all). The monochrome version does not have very impressive graphics compared to the color version. It is almost as if the creators of the program made it as a quick and dirty version, then spent all their time on the color version.

The program does have a synthesized voice that is nice but, because of a very limited vocabulary, might get irritating after a while. Luckily the program has lots of options, one of which is a choice of voice, silent, or the same sounds as the 8-bit version. It did print out things

like "mate in 2", or "mate in 1", or tried to resign when losing, which I found kind of nice. I would have liked to have heard some other synthesized phrases, like: "I didn't see that!", "Good Move!", "Oh oh!", "Take That!", "Oh no, not my Queen!!!", "...are we going to wait here all day, or are you going to move?", or "Hmmmmmm, what are you up to now, human?"

Both the 8 and 16-bit versions allow you to get a listing on your printer so far. This came in handy for running one game against another, or making a record of the games. Chessmaster 2000 has a lot more features that I will not go into now.

I did want to give you the final score of the computer games I played against each other.

All but two games were played on the 30 second per move levels. I tried to have each side go first on some of the games (the results did not show any advantage one way or the other on this): 16-bit Chessmaster won one and lost one against 8-bit Chessmaster. 8-bit Chessmaster won one and had a draw with 16-bit Krabat (public domain program). 8-bit Chessmaster won one, and lost two against TechMate. TechMate 16-bit won one and lost one against Larry Atkin's 8-bit Odesta chess 7.0. I wish I could have had more time to play more games against the programs.

I would have liked to play all combinations of programs against each other. I would have liked to include Sargon III (which just came out with an add saying they beat Chessmaster 2000 almost all the time), Psion Chess, and any others out there at the moment. Ideally all the games would be best out of 7 games (or at least the best out of 5), and perhaps different series played at different compatible levels. I would also have liked to have had access to 2 16-bit, and 2 8-bit computers at the same time to test 16-bit against 16-bit programs, and the 8-bit against 8-bit programs (although I was surprised at how even the 8-bit against the 16-bit games were).

Unfortunately, I am very limited in computer time. I was also using a flaky old TV for my 8-bit that, after a while, would start uncontrollably to vertically flip up and down so you couldn't see what was going on. There was no way to adjust the TV picture so it would stay still, so I had to give it a rest of about 5-10 minutes after every 15-20 minutes of play. This really added to the time of the games, and so cut down on the total number of games I could play. This usually meant that each game listed above took about one to one and a half hours to play and record. (continued)



ACE IN THE HOLE

by
Rick Graham



I'm really steamed up. I just wrote my article praising the ST computer and when I saved it, it bombed! I don't know if the 8-bit folks know what this means, but I wish I didn't. For those lucky ones who don't know what this means, it means the keyboard locks up and bombs show up on the screen. Bummer! Yeah, I lost the whole thing.

Anyhow, I was recently sent on a fact finding tour to Plaquemine, Louisiana and what that has to do with the ST may be a little hard to explain, but I'll try. My partner and I went down there for Dow Chemical to compare our way of operations with theirs. Oddly enough we both have ST computers. He has the 1040 and I have a 520 that John has blown out to 1 megabyte. So I need not hide my head in shame when a 1040 owner is around. We took copious notes, and the whole time I wanted a computer of some kind to write them up with.

Well, we got back and I got elected to write up our report. Now when I used to write things on my XE I constantly worried about the size of the bigger files. The XE is a fine machine, but 128K is 128K as the saying goes. Well the ST never even looked twice when I finally finished the twenty page report (complete with approximately forty pages of documentation, which I did not type). Had I been a little more knowledgeable at the time I would have used Thunder (as I am right now) to check my spelling online. I usually do pretty well with spelling, but after 14 hours of typing, creating and revising I even put two 'd's in introduction! It kept me humble though, real humble!

One of the things that happened, however, was that I felt so at home with the ST and Word Writer ST that I asked my supervisor if I could go home and write the report. He offered me typewriters, I.B.M.'s, VAX, and PDP's and I offered to take vacation to use my ST. Guess who one. He let me go.

What happened next was quite interesting. Supervisors were amazed that my friend and I were able to put out a professional report (thankyou Atari), and all of a sudden we were doing guest appearances in front of real important people. We were asked to talk to all the major supervisors on the site (about 30

people) and explain our report. I was somewhat apprehensive as we were asked to put on a professional talk, complete with overheads and all. I've always considered my computer to be my personal ace in the hole and proceeded to look for a way it could help me.

I always loved Print Shop on my 8-bit computer, so I bought 'Printmaster +' for the ST and just love it. It's so simple to use and it lets me save whole files so I can call them up instead of doing them over new each time. I spent one whole Sunday afternoon and evening making up the most different set of overheads any of these folks had ever seen. It helps when one's sense of humor is leaning a little towards the bizarre side when making up these overheads. For example, I just love the screaming face. Everytime I see it I have to smile or grin. It's hilarious. If everything went right, there should be a picture of the 'screaming face' at the top of this column. I opened with this overhead, and after the guffaws of laughter settled down, I was able to continue with my other overheads, which were a little more serious. It was a great attention getter, never even had to raise my voice. Of course, I couldn't resist closing with an overhead of a winking pig and the caption of 'that's all folks!'

I want to stress that through all of this, I felt equal to the task, because my computer is equal to the task. The Atari ST is a computer that no one can really put down. It continually surprises me with what it can do. The other thing I'm thankful that home computing has done for me in the workplace is, computer literacy. I work in a job that until recently required no computer skills. I personally ran the lines to hook us up with the PDP and VAX systems. Guess what, I'm the only computer literate in my department. Now I teach basic computer skills in addition to the other things I do. I do this unofficially. It's like being in a computer club. Just another good old Atarian trying to help out a fellow user. Well keep on computin' and when I get something else in my craw I'll spit it out again. Anyhow, just wanted to let you know how one average guy got a leg up from a very above average computer!



THE BASIC CORNER

by
Mark Butler



Welcome back everyone. The Basic Corner is a continuing series of articles that attempt to give some help into the dark murky world of BASIC programming. Most people know how to do a little in BASIC but usually that is a far cry from being able to sit down and write a complete program.

What we have done in this series was to define the program we wanted (in this case a lunar lander game), make a rough outline of the program, take each broad idea and refine it down until we were ready to code it. We have written the entire game in this newsletter over the course of a year, and I hope you have a much better idea of how one person goes about programming and problem solving. Let me hasten to add that the way I did it in this program is not necessarily the best way in all cases (or even in any case). You must do things the way you feel comfortable with.

Hopefully you have a feel for how to tackle these type of problems, don't let them daunt you. Start with the big picture, ignoring details, and gradually refine it until the problem that once seemed impossible is gone.

Last month we created an opening title page and a simple joystick driven menu that set some program parameters. This month we want to add some kind of scoring to the game. At first this seems very difficult to track down, how would we go about adding scoring to our game?

Lets step back for a moment and look at the big picture, ignoring all details about how we would do this or that, for now assume we can do anything. My original idea about scoring was to give a higher score the slower you landed. Thus a poor (hitting too fast) landing would give you very few points. The game could then loop around until you finally crashed and then give you a cumulative score.

Ok now that we have defined the problem it doesn't seem quite so bad does it? We know we have a maximum speed that we can land (CRASHSPEED), the minimum speed is obviously zero. The current speed at the time of landing is held in the variable DELTAY. Therefore we must come up with some kind of math statement that will calculate the score based on those numbers. We are also going to need another variable to hold the cumulative score. I will call it TOTALSCORE, and we define it thus:

```
1100 TOTALSCORE = 0
```

Our first step is to come up with the score. I think you should get between 0 and 100 points for a landing. Now bear with me because we must delve

into a little math to get this.

Since we want to break the crash speed into 100 segments we will create a new variable called INC that is CRASHSPEED over 100. We can do this in the EOG routine right after the check to see if we crashed or not:

```
6060 INC = CRASHSPEED/100
```

I think my brain is fried, i'm sitting here trying to puzzle this out and it should be easy. Lets see if $CRASHSPEED = 1$ then $INC = .01$ and if $DELTAY = .5$, which would be a good landing of $1/2$ the crash speed, we want our score to be 50. AHA! if we take the DELTAY value and divide it by INC we get 50! Of course since we want a higher score the slower we are we subtract it all from 100.

```
6070 CURSCORE = 100 - DELTAY/INC
```

Of course we could combine those 2 formulas to get something like:

```
CURSCORE=100-(DELTAY * 100) / CRASHSPEED
```

But 2 years from now when you pulled this program out and were puzzling over it you would ask yourself who the idiot was that came up with this line. Remember that it may not be as space efficient or as fast to break things like this into steps but it sure helps later on.

Now that we have got our current score from 1 to 100 we should print it out. In line 6050 we printed out a congratulations message and the cursor should now be on the line below it which is either line 2 or 21 depending on how you think of it. We could just print out the new value but it would be nice to have it count up so it would look impressive. What we need then is a loop, but a loop from what to what?

We want the loop to start at TOTALSCORE each time and go to TOTALSCORE plus CURSCORE, so we put in line 6080. Next we want the new values to overprint the old ones so we must use a position statement:

```
6080 FOR LOOP = TOTALSCORE TO  
TOTALSCORE + CURSCORE  
6090 POSITION 2,2: PRINT "SCORE = ";LOOP;  
6100 NEXT LOOP
```

I gave it a try and all the numbers did not print on top of each other. What is the problem? I tried 2,21 for the position and it did the same thing. Ah,

well back to the manual... Apparently you cannot use the POSITION command to get to the text area when in a split screen mode, at least I did not see any easy way to do it. So we will do things another way.

One very handy feature is the ability to store the control codes into print statements by using the Esc key. In our case we want to delete the old line with the score on it so we can print the new line. If you are typing in Basic and you want to delete the old line you would hit a shift-delete. We can insert that command right into line 6090. Go up to 6090 and insert a space right before the word SCORE but after the quote. Now with the cursor in that space hit the Esc key (nothing should happen on the screen, but that tells the computer that the next key hit will be inserted into line 6090) then you hit your shift-delete. What you should see is a reverse video up arrow. Now when the computer gets to line 6090 and starts to print, the first thing it prints is a delete line then the rest of it.

Well I tried it and it looked pretty nice but that stupid cursor is right there blinking away and messing up the effect. Remember that every time we change graphics modes the cursor gets turned on so we must turn the cursor off before we print. Lets make it line 6075:

6075 POKE 752,1

Everything now works perfectly except... The game ends after counting up the scores. What we want is for it to always loop around unless we crash. Now it would be easy to just put a GOTO on line 6110 that sends us back to line 200 so we could start the whole thing over. We would not just place a RUN statement in 6110 because then it would go back through the entire opening sequence again.

Even though doing a GOTO 200 would certainly work it would not be the best. Why? Because if you selected a random game you would expect each one to be random and if just went back to line 200 then we would never change all the variables.

So what do we do? Looking back through the program we see that we set the random variables in lines 1530-1560 and line 1570 is a RETURN. This presents the solution to our problem we simply:

6110 GOSUB 1530: GOTO 200

AND ITS DONE RIGHT? Well unfortunately not. I tried it and there are still a couple of problems. First of all the sound never gets turned off after lines 6010-6040. We can solve this by inserting:

6045 SOUND 0,0,0,0

The other problem is that our total score never increases. Each time it counts up from 1. Looking back over the EOG routine I find that we have a TOTALSCORE variable and a CURSCORE variable

but we never add the CURSCORE to the TOTALSCORE. We can remedy that by:

6105 TOTALSCORE = TOTALSCORE +
CURSCORE

And that as they say is that! Our game is complete, at least as much as any game ever is. There are still a lot of things that you could do with it. You could add a nice message when you finally do crash that prints out your total score with appropriate congratulations. If you feel really adventurous you can save the high scores to disk and compare the current score to them. You could experiment with the shape of the ship, we picked out 3 dots because it was easy. Perhaps 5 dots would look nicer and not slow things down much. It would be nice if a rocket flame appeared only when the button was pressed.

Other things that you might do are: The landscape does not look terribly good, it would be nice to make it look more realistic; perhaps by adding a shadow for each mountain. How about overhangs so you have to maneuver more carefully. A major addition would be a fuel supply, you could add a limited amount of fuel and add the fuel remainder to the score.

As you can see there are a multitude of ways to expand any program. This program is complete as far as I am going to take it and so is this column. I hope in the past year you have gotten something out of this column and hopefully are closer to entering the richly rewarding world of Basic programming.

Disk of the Month

8-bit

This month's two sided 8-bit disk contains 2 original programs by Mark Butler: UNO that fun card game and LUNAR LANDER his epic programming tutorial in its completed form. Also included are some new digitized PICS and some digitized Music.

ST

You saw it demoed at the last meeting! This month's ST disk contains the JUGGLER demo and the game STONEAGE DELUX which is a Boulder Dash type game. Stoneage comes complete with its own editor so you can make your own screens. Also a new accessory that does almost everything and another Wheel of Fortune puzzle.

SUPPORT DACE -> Buy the DOM

A PIECE OF THE ROCK...FINAL CHAPTER

by
Stephen Roquemore

Greetings and salutations, fellow DACE Atarians! After a VERY long absence, it appears that I am back for another performance... Well, actually, our illustrious editor, "Big Mike", asked me to write *ANYTHING* for the Newsletter. SO here goes...

As some of you may know, I was unemployed since August 1st last year until March 2nd this year; I have since gained employment, but in Springfield, Illinois! I am employed by Cutler-Williams, Inc., a contract programming outfit; I am currently assigned to various projects for the State of Illinois Dept. of Public Aid (how ironic!).

I immediately sought out the local Atari user group known as Lincolnland Atari User Group, and proceeded to attend what they VERY loosely describe as "meetings". You all may think that DACE may have had its problems; however, compared to DACE, LLAUG is literally non-existent. The meetings had NO leadership at all, were not even formally conducted like DACE (and I use the word "formally" VERY loosely). They were no more than rap sessions with a total attendance of maybe 7 guys... Yes, there are no women in this "club"...

It was finally decided at the June "meeting" that the club is officially dead, and that we would suspend meetings until September. Then we will get together and re-found the LLAUG (or whatever else we choose to call it). As a side note, there is a fairly active Atari group in Bloomington, about 70 miles north. You all in the Bay Area don't know how lucky you are to live there, when it comes to Atari support of any kind. There are NO computer stores here that sell anything but the "ComputerLand" type of products; there is only ONE software store, catering to MSDOS and Apple universes only.

The ONLY way you can get any hardware of software is mail order, or a long drive to St. Louis, or an even longer drive to Chicago! There is one electronics outfit here that is a warranty repair station for all kinds of electronic products, and they have an Atari Service sign in their window; I don't know any more about that; I've never needed service.

Almost everyone you talk to here, either store owners or the general public, are under the impression the Atari no longer exists! They heard they went belly-up in 1984, and that was the last of it... Believe me, as far as Atari computers are concerned, living here is like being stranded on the Moon with no hope of rescue!

On another note, I hope you all read my delayed (by the publisher) review of Dollars & Sense by Monogram, in the September ANTIC; I will have a review of MoneySpin in November (a Wheel of Fortune clone), and my review of MicroMod TurboBase in December. In addition, I am writing for ANALOG a survey of 8-bit word processors as a companion piece to one by Art Leyenberger on 16-bit word processors. I don't know when it will be published; I haven't finished it yet!!

Well, I guess I should wrap up this epistle to the privileged... Best wishes to all of you out there in God's country; someday, I shall return!!

P.S. The stuff below is still for sale is you are interested; my address appears below. Prices are negotiable - you pay shipping via UPS.

ATARI 8-BIT HARDWARE & SOFTWARE FOR SALE

ATARI 800 with Axlon RAMDisk and Bit3 80-column board, Newell RAMROD OS, OMNIMON!

USI Pi2 GREEN MONITOR with cable

AMDECK Duel 3" Disk Drive with 5 boxes of disks

CHINON 5.25" drive with 34-pin connector (hooks to AMDEK)

Miscellaneous RAM and ROM boards

SYNFile+ 130XE version, SynTrend, C65 and Deep Blue C compilers, DATA PERFECT, LETTER PERFECT, SPELL PERFECT, BACK TO BASICS ACCOUNTING SERIES, Miles Payroll System, INSYST! INVENTORY SYSTEM, S.A.M. THE SOFTWARE AUTOMATIC MOUTH, FINANCIAL Cookbook, ABC BASIC Compiler, and more!

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